

THE WATCHMAN
WEDNESDAY, JULY 30.
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The Sumner Watchman has by far the largest circulation (especially in the surrounding country) of any paper published in Sumter, and was established in 1850.

THE PLATFORM OF THE REFORM MOVEMENT.

Objection is still urged, by some, to the resolutions of the Press Conference, and the platform of the June Convention put forth in pursuance thereof, because, it is said, the position thereby assumed—the acknowledgment of the provisions of the Fifteenth Amendment of the Federal Constitution and the accordance, as therein established, of full and exact justice and equality, civil and political, to all citizens, white and black—involves sacrifice of principle, and leads to social equality and miscegenation. A reading statement, in the face of the advance of events, and the irresistible logic of "accomplished facts," has fallen back from point to point, and now makes still another feeble stand behind those positions. We believe them to be untenable as any of the ground we have attempted to hold, and been forced to yield, in this general issue, since the overthrow of the Southern armies and the final fact of emancipation. And we tell the people, with all the earnestness of which we are capable, to heed not the voice that would still keep alive the hope, that, by some sweeping counter revolution, some extraordinary influence—some, (we would say) miracle of Divine interposition—the ballot is to be wrested from the hands of the black man, and power, in that way, restored to the intelligent and respectable white men of the country. It is a delusion—a fatal delusion—a delusion which tends directly to protract the evils from which we now suffer, to lead us deeper and deeper into the shades of obscurity and humiliation, and to make us more thoroughly the prey of the corrupt men now ruling the State.

But, we contend, that we do not sacrifice principle in the platform alluded to. If there was sacrifice of principle when Generals Lee and Johnson surrendered their swords to overwhelming numbers, instead of protracting the struggle until the last man was disabled—if there was sacrifice of principle when we admitted that our effort to establish Southern independence was a failure, and the abolition of slavery a reality, then is there sacrifice of principle now, when we admit the political and civil equality of the black man. They are all equally and alike the results of the war—enforced by the same power, and the same extent of power. And it is equally as futile for us to attempt to ignore or resist one of those, as either of them, or all of them. If it was the part of wisdom—the dictate of self-preservation and interest—to admit the existence of one of these, and act in accordance therewith, it is equally so with reference to all of them, for each is part and parcel of the other.

And we contend that neither social equality or miscegenation follow as a consequence. These are exclusively matters of taste—above and beyond all application of force or legislative enactment, be it ever so arbitrary. And, paradoxical as it may seem, it is nevertheless admissible of logical demonstration, and the assumption is borne out in the philosophy of human nature, that continued refusal to admit the equal political and civil rights of the colored man, under existing circumstances, tends more to produce those results than would a quiet acknowledgment of those rights.

The solution and successful maintenance of the position is found in that distinctive and governing element of man's nature that seeks the possession and enjoyment of that, the right to, or enjoyment of, which, is disputed or denied. And the ground assumed is but stronger, because we find the attendant circumstances peculiarly adapted to the development of the element involved.—For example: The supreme law of the land accords equal political and civil rights to the colored man. The right to their enjoyment by him, or the principle or authority by which those privileges are conferred, is questioned, ignored or disputed by a portion of the people in the midst of whom he lives. Led as he has been and still is, under such circumstances, it is at once seen that he will not only stifle for the unpleasing realization in detail of what is guaranteed, but that he will even reach beyond. Under the impulse and opportunity afforded by the refusal to concede civil and political rights, those who lead him for their own purposes of aggrandizement, and who find the business so profitable, the better to secure their lead and grasp upon him, make a show (and we contend that even with them it is but a show) of social equality. And thus, by continued refusal to admit civil and political equality, we induce a tendency to that which seems to be so much dreaded. Whereas, once fully admitted, agitation would cease, our disturbed social elements would sooner settle down upon their legitimate basis, and society be left to flow back in its natural channels, governed by those fundamental principles which underlie

the civil and political rights of the colored man, and the maintenance of the platform of the Reform Party.

THE PLATFORM OF THE REFORM MOVEMENT.

There is one portion of "Sumner's" articles which it becomes every true man to reject with just indignation. We refer, of course, to his insidious insinuations as to the honor and sincerity of the leaders of the Reform movement. The old adage, "Honi soit qui mal y pense" is at all times a fit retort to those who think evil, even where the antecedents of the parties of whom the evil is thought are not known. But "Sumner" can be met with higher ground here. In this case, there are antecedents—there is a record to which all may refer, and may there read in fair characters, the history of those "honorable," "all honorable men," "against the councils of whom he would poison the public ear, by insinuating his insidious *sans-pens*." We accept in good faith that which was intended as sarcasm, as we verily believe that they are "all honorable men," in the highest sense of the term.

The only criterion that we possess, by which we may judge of the future, is the past. This is the substance of an axiom commended by reason, by experience, and by law. "Sumner" is doubtless aware of the past of those men, and if "Sumner" is not, the people of the State are. South Carolina knows full well that "they have done the State some service." If there is one thing which, above all others, should cheer the hearts of our people, and encourage them to hope for better times, it is the knowledge that we have among us true, manly hearts—that there are men among us who live both in the past and the present. In the one, by their deeds, and in the other, by their earnest efforts to do good. Men who have seen the lightning flashes of "grim visaged war," and did not quail. Men who, so far from deserting principle—judging by our only standards, the past—would infinitely prefer to die battling, with that glorious motto of that greatest of patriots and statesmen—I mean William of Orange—upon their lips: "Je maintiendrai."

"VINDICATOR."

A COLORED CADET AT WEST POINT.

J. W. Smith, a colored cadet at West Point, writes as follows to his relatives at Hartford, Conn. It will be observed that the mass of the West Point cadets are from the North, East and West, the number from the South being very small: WEST POINT, N. Y., June 29, 1870. Your kind letter should have been answered long ere this, but really I have been so harassed with examinations and the usual drill and all treatment of these cadets that I could not write or do anything else scarcely I passed examination all right and got in, but my companion, Howard, failed and was rejected. Since he went away I have been lonely indeed, and now these fellows appear to be trying their utmost to run me off, and I fear they will succeed if they continue as they have begun. We went into camp yesterday, and not a moment has passed since then but some one of them has been cursing and abusing me. All right they were around me last night, cursing and swearing at me so that I did not sleep two hours all night. It is just the same at the table, and what I get to eat I must snatch for like a dog. I don't wish to resign if I can get along at all; but I don't think it will be for the best for me to stay and take all the abuses and insults that are heaped upon me. The examination was very hard this year—harder than ever before—and since I have been successful in getting in, I will stay as long as I possibly can. I and the cadets refused to drill his squad because it was in it, and they reduced him from corporal to private for disobedience of orders, and they are all mad about it. The one who drills the squad now is the meanest specimen of humanity I ever saw. After marching us out to the drill ground, he said to me: "Stand off one side from the line, you d—d black son of a b—h. You are too near that white man. I want you to remember you are not on an equal footing with the white men in your class, and what you learn here you will have to pick up for I won't teach you a d—d thing." And thus he kept me standing until the captain came around inspecting, when he pretended that he put me there to teach me a move which I had never practiced before. And I could say nothing at all, or I would have been locked up for disobedience of orders or disrespect to "superior officers." If it ever happens again, I shall deny it to his face and then resign.

THE LATEST.

From dispatches under date of Paris, July 17, and London July 18, the following is made up: No collision between the French and Prussian troops had yet taken place. The neutrality of Sweden had been officially declared, and Switzerland assumes position of armed neutrality. France demanded a decision from the South German States by noon of the 18th. A panic prevailed at London because of a rumor that the Emperor of Russia had pronounced in favor of Prussia and mobilized the Russian army. Prussian reverses are expected at first owing to the superior preparations and efficiency of the French army. The London "Times" says that France, without the shadow of excuse, or justification, plunges Europe in a war which no person living may see ended. Norway and Sweden will join France provided French fleets will operate in North German seas. England is negotiating the neutrality of Holland, which France favors, it is said. France distrusts Belgium. The Prussians are in force at Saarbrack.

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